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Bankrupt W.R. Grace Puts \$32 Million Into Superfund Cleanup

WASHINGTON, DC, December 21, 2007 (ENS) - The global supplier of specialty chemicals W.R. Grace has agreed to a \$34 million bankruptcy settlement for cleanup costs at 32 Superfund sites across the country, the U.S. Justice Department said Wednesday.

The federal government determined that W.R. Grace contributed to the contamination at these 32 sites.

The action settles a bankruptcy claim brought by the federal government to recover money for Superfund site cleanup. Superfund is the federal program that investigates and cleans up the most complex uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites in the country.

With corporate headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, and employees in 40 countries, the company manufactures construction chemicals, building materials and chemical additives, catalysts used by petroleum refineries, and chemicals used in ink jet paper, paints, toothpastes, rubber compounds, insulated glass, as well as in edible oil refining.

One of the 32 sites covered in the settlement is the R&H Oil Company site, an inactive refinery and gasoline blending facility in a densely populated area of San Antonio, Texas.

Several spills and other releases of petroleum waste during operations have resulted in the contamination of shallow ground water beneath the facility and threaten nearby municipal drinking water wells used by the city of San Antonio.

contaminated sites is surrounded by cattle grazing land in Santa Barbara County, California. From 1973 to 1989, the Casmalia Resources Hazardous Waste Management Facility on this site

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This settlement agreement does not resolve environmental claims related to the cleanup of the Libby Asbestos Site in Libby, Montana, and the Curtis Bay Site near Baltimore. These claims are still pending.

"This settlement will make money available to substantially help the cleanup of many Superfund sites around the country," said Ronald Tenpas, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "This settlement is a good outcome for both the taxpayers and the environment."

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